



## NEW ZEALAND HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINS' ASSOCIATION

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Email: [REDACTED]

10 October 2024

Health and Disability Commissioner  
PO Box 1791  
Auckland 1140  
**Email to:** [review@hdc.org.nz](mailto:review@hdc.org.nz)

Dear Commissioner,

### **NZHCA submission on review of the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the review of the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights.

We refer to Appendix 2, Right 1(3) on page 57 of the consultation document. In the document it is proposed that the words "different cultural, religious, social and ethnic groups..." be removed, in favour of "culture, language, identity, values and beliefs"

We feel that this has the overall effect of weakening this particular right in terms of its understanding and interpretation by consumers and providers in relation to consumers' right to have their spiritual needs met while receiving health care. While we support the words "culture, language identity and values" we do not feel that the

word “beliefs” adequately includes the concept of spirituality (which does not always involve beliefs), nor does it acknowledge faith traditions. While these may be closely inter-related with culture, identity and values, we feel that they should be made explicit in this right.

While there are other Acts such as the Bill of Rights (1990), or the Human Rights Act (1993) that mention religious beliefs, these themselves are out of date in this respect. Nor are these Acts specific to healthcare as the Code is. Spiritual harm is now recognised in the National Adverse Events Policy 2023 and as such we believe that the revised wording of this section of the Code should read, “culture, language, identity, values, spiritual and other beliefs” or similar.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Habib', written over a horizontal line.

Rev Amail Habib

**President**